

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested. Claims 1-38 were previously pending, with claims 1, 12, 21, and 32 being independent. Claims 12, 14, 21, 28, 32, and 33 are herein amended, therefore claims 1-38 are currently pending with claims 1, 12, 21, and 32 being independent.

In the Office Action mailed February 8, 2006, claims 1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12-15, 17, 21, and 28-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Galloway, U.S. Patent No. 6,899,186. Claims 1-8, 10-15, 17-35, 37, and 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McKay, U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0226751, in view of Galloway. Claims 9 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Galloway in view of Baugh, U.S. Patent No. 4,848,469. Finally, claims 9, 16, and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McKay in view of Galloway and Baugh.

On March 30, 2006, Kameron Kelly, attorney for Applicants, participated in a personal interview with Shane Bomar, Examiner, and David Bagnell, Supervisory Examiner. Examiners Bomar and Bagnell agreed that the prior art cited in the Office Action to reject claim 1 did not disclose a drilling shoe with a fixed section and a rotatable section as recited in claim 1 and therefore withdrew the rejection of claim 1. Mr. Kelly agreed to incorporate limitations similar to those of claim 14 into independent claim 12, limitations similar to those of claim 28 into independent claim 21, and limitations similar to those of claim 33 into independent claim 32 to distinguish those claims from the prior art of record.

Turning initially to claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that the prior art cited in the Office Action does not teach or suggest a drilling shoe with a “fixed section adapted to be coupled to the casing” and a “rotatable section coupled to the fixed section.” Galloway, for example, discloses a single piece (315) that engages a casing (150), not a fixed section and a rotatable section. McKay similarly fails to disclose a drilling shoe with a “fixed section adapted to be coupled to the casing” and a “rotatable section coupled to the fixed section” as recited in claim 1.

Independent claims 12, 21, and 33 have been amended to recite a drill shoe with a

Application No. 10/799,790
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rotatable portion and a fixed portion, and therefore are distinguished from the prior art for the reasons set forth above in relation to claim 1.

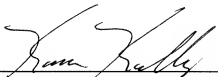
Therefore, the present application should now be in condition for allowance and such allowance is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions, please contact the undersigned at (800) 445-3460.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0522.

Respectfully submitted,

HOVEY WILLIAMS LLP

By:


Kameron D. Kelly, Reg. No. 44,181
2405 Grand Boulevard, Suite 400
Kansas City, Missouri 64108
(816) 474-9050
ATTORNEYS FOR APPLICANTS

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS:
ConocoPhillips Company - I.P. Legal
P.O. Box 2443
Bartlesville, OK 74005